

**Kelly Ranch  
Habitat Conservation Area**

**Annual Report  
October 2002 - September 2003**

*Prepared for:*  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
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## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the management activities carried out on the Kelly Ranch Habitat Conservation Area by the Preserve manager during the fiscal year of October 1, 2002 to September 31, 2003. The tasks and objectives discussed below are those derived from the *Kelly Ranch Habitat Conservation Area Management Plan*, prepared by the Center for Natural Lands Management (Center) in November of 2002. The Preserve manager is Markus Spiegelberg.

Kelly Ranch is located approximately 1 to 2 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean and lies at the east end of Batiquitos Lagoon (Figure 1 and 2). Roads near the Preserve include Cannon Road along the western boundary and Faraday Avenue near its southern boundary. The Preserve is not one unit, but is made of multiple parcels varying in size from a few acres to about 15 acres that are located within the housing development of Kelly Ranch and surrounding communities (Figure 3). Most of the area of the Preserve and adjacent land was formerly known as Evans Point. The site was set aside to protect its habitat, coastal sage scrub and southern maritime chaparral, and the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) (Figure 4).

The Center began management in March of 2002 and has a conservation easement over the property and has been fully endowed for long-term management.

Management at the Preserve includes signing and maintaining fences (capital improvements), biological surveys, habitat restoration, public services and reporting. Each of these activities and their Year 2003 results are summarized below and fully described within this report. A complete list of management activities undertaken by date and task is provided in Appendix B.

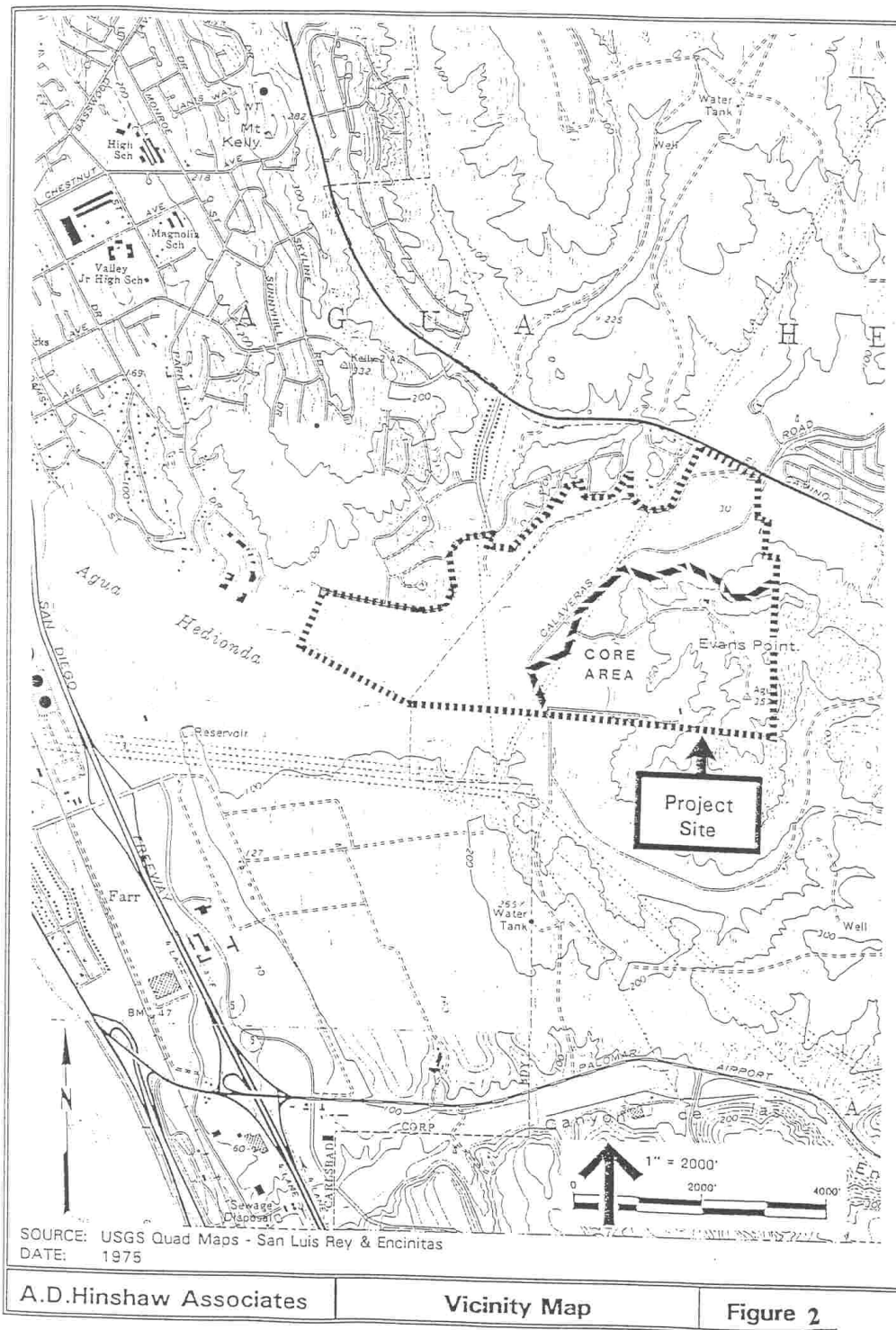
## SUMMARY

- Two pair of coastal California gnatcatchers was detected during bird community surveys.
- A complete plant list was completed by McMillan Biological Consulting and sensitive species locations were counted and mapped.
- Twenty Orcutt's hazardia were planted near Cannon Road.
- Regular patrol, site enforcement and trash pickup was conducted to protect the Preserve.
- Signs were posted along the edge of all parcels.
- The Preserve Manager met with the state and federal wildlife agencies to discuss management issues.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

No major capital improvements were undertaken by the Center during the year. The Center posted about 50 signs around the perimeters of each parcel in the fall of 2002. The Center also posted a large 4 X 6 foot redwood sign along Cannon Road.





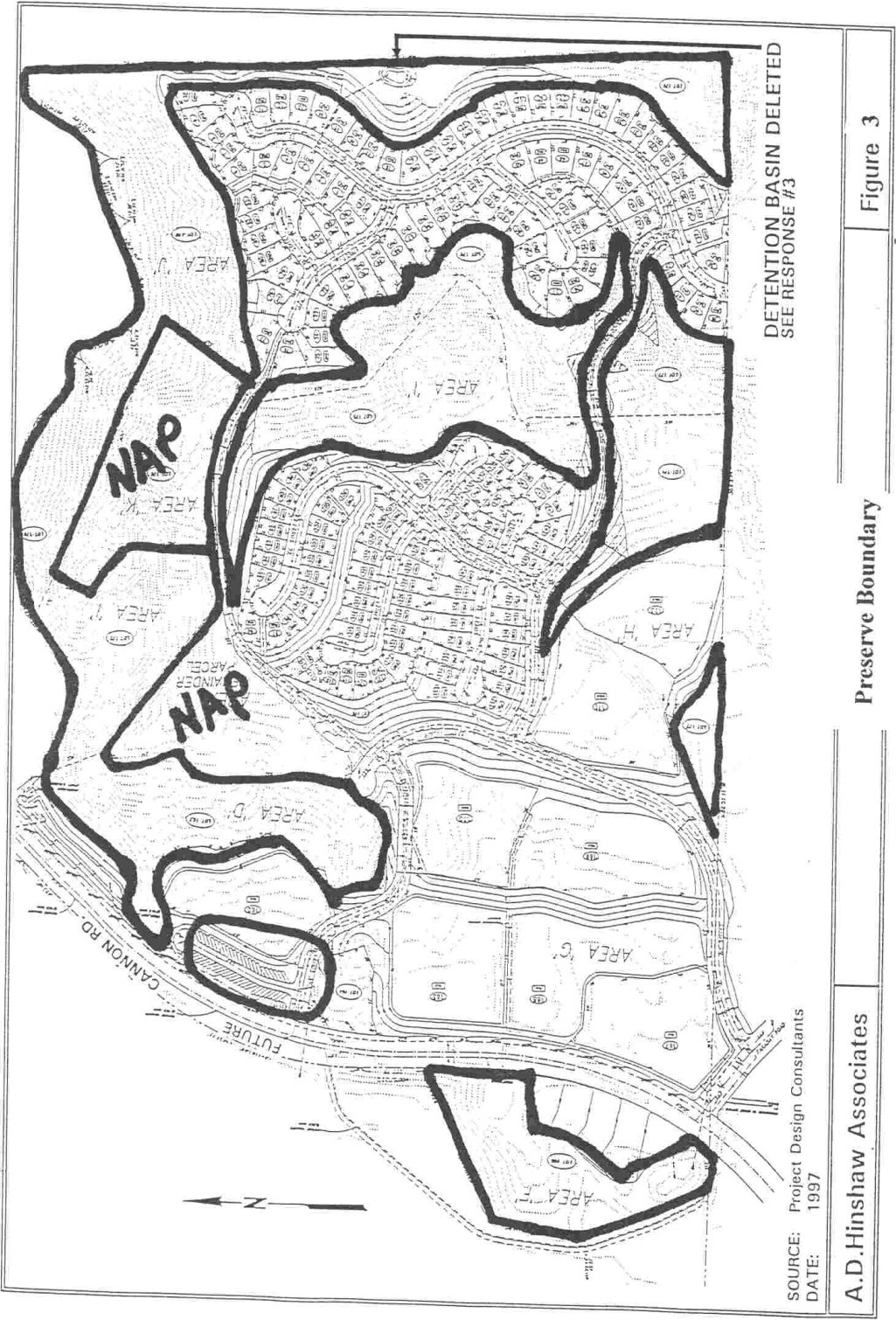


Figure 4, veg map



## BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS

Year 2003 was the first year of biological surveys carried out by the Center. The *Management Plan* outlines the goals of biological monitoring at the Preserve. The general goal of the monitoring activities at Kelly Ranch is to 1) collect inventory data and 2) begin to develop population trend data on individual species and for certain taxonomic groups found within the Preserve. This information will allow us to make better informed management decisions should an individual species or population be declining, or possibly increasing, in population size. In addition, since the Preserve is small, fragmented and relatively isolated from other large stands of habitat, monitoring activities are directed at determining the effect of such conditions on the vegetation and wildlife.

Monitoring at this time includes plant surveys, bird community surveys and directed searches for the gnatcatcher. Non-avian animal species are noted anecdotally during other types of surveys.

Table 1 outlines survey dates, times, weather conditions and type of survey conducted. Unless noted otherwise, all surveys and monitoring activities were conducted by Markus Spiegelberg who is permitted by the USFWS and CDFG (USFWS PRT-787-924, Scientific Collectors Permit # 801106-05) for the gnatcatcher and for activities such as small mammal trapping. Results of surveys are provided in the following sections.

### 1. Reptiles and Amphibians

Reptiles and amphibians were noted anecdotally during surveys for other taxa. No focused surveys were conducted. Species detected in 2003 include western fence lizards (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), and side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), and a southwestern pacific rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber*).

A list of the species observed during the 2003 season and any other pertinent data, is shown in Appendix B.

**Table 1. Survey dates, times and weather conditions.**

Survey Date	Time	Weather Conditions	Type of Survey
March 19, 2003	06:30 - 09:00	Clear, calm, 58-62°F	Bird Community, CAGN
April 30, 2003	06:30 - 9:00	Clear, calm, 60-65 °F	Bird Community, CAGN
July 1, 2003	06:30 -9:00	Partly cloudy, calm, 65-75 °F	Bird Community, CAGN

\* CAGN = Directed survey for coastal California gnatcatcher

- **Mammals**

No focused mammal surveys were conducted in 2003. Mammals observed during surveys include cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), and racoon (tracks, *Procyon lotor*).

- **Birds**

Avian monitoring was conducted during the months of March through July on three separate days (see Table 1) Surveys include meandering through the property noting species observed and conducting focused USFWS protocol survey for coastal California gnatcatchers.

Appendix B shows the results of bird surveys for 2003, the first year of bird surveys at the preserve. Notable observations in 2003 coastal California gnatcatcher and great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*). Two pair of gnatcatchers were observed during surveys in 2003 (Figure 5); one was located east of Cannon Road and the other west of Cannon Road. One pair was observed with a family group in July.

- **Insects**

Insect were noted during other surveys conducted during the year. Painted lady, acmon blue and behr's metalmark were some of the insect species observed.

- **Plant Surveys**

Scott McMillan was hired to create an updated plant species list for the preserve and to note and map any sensitive species. Scott's list of plant species present at the Preserve was not delivered to the Center in time to make it into this report, but will be provided in next years annual report. A list of sensitive species observed and their abundances is provided in table 2. These species are mapped on Figure 5.

Orcutt's hazardia. The Center owns the only known population of Orcutt's hazardia (OH, *Hazardia orcuttii*) in San Diego located at the Manchester Habitat Conservation Area. In the spring of 2003, the Center planted 25 individual OH at Kelly Ranch, just off Cannon Road. Habitat in this area is similar to Manchester as is its vicinity to the coast and coastal habitats. By summer of 2003, 20 OH had survived. Each individual was watered every two to three weeks with up to ½ gallon per individuals. Some OH were observed flowering in late summer, early fall.

**figure 5 sensitive species**

**Table 2. Sensitive Plant Species observed (data from Merkel & Assoc., 1998).**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Estimated Population (from Merkel &amp; Assoc., 1998)</b>	<b>2003</b>
California adolphia ( <i>Adolphia californica</i> ) CNPS List 2	“Several hundred”	24
Del Mar manzanita ( <i>Arctostaphylos glandulosa</i> ssp. <i>crassifolia</i> ) FE, CNPS List 1B, MHCP.	29 (probably spp. <i>zacaensis</i> )	<50 located in dense habitat and difficult to count
Wart-stemmed ceanothus ( <i>Ceanothus verrucosus</i> ) CNPS List 2, MHCP	“in the hundreds”	9
Small-flowered microseris ( <i>Microseris douglasii</i> ) CNPS List 4	20	not found
Prostrate spineflower ( <i>Chorizanthe procumbens</i> ) CNPS List 4	??? (“loss of majority of population” due to construction)	none
Western dichondra ( <i>Dichondra occidentalis</i> ) CNPS List 4	unknown	common
Palmer’s grapplinghook ( <i>Harpagonella palmeri</i> ) CNPS List 2	???	Approximately 400
Orcutt’s hazardia ( <i>Hazardia orcuttii</i> ) CT, MHCP	none	20 (transplanted from the Manchester Habitat Conservation Area)
Nuttall’s scrub oak ( <i>Quercus dumosa</i> ) MHCP, CNPS List 1B	??? (“lightly scattered”)	common
Cliff spurge ( <i>Euphorbia misera</i> ) MHCP, CNPS List 2	“one thicket”	3
Ashy-spike moss ( <i>Selaginella cinerascens</i> ) CNPS List 4	???	common

\* FE= Federally listed endangered; CT= California threatened; MHCP= Multiple Habitat Conservation Program Covered Species; CNPS= California Native Plant Society; ???= no initial count made during planning process.

## **HABITAT RESTORATION**

Habitat restoration goals for the preserve include removing non-native plants from the preserve. For the most part the Preserve is in good condition and has only a low amount of non-native plant cover. No restoration activities occurred in 2003.

## **PUBLIC SERVICE**

Public service activities have centered on patrolling the preserve in an attempt to control damages to the fences, dumping and associated vandalism. Patrols were conducted approximately every 10-14 days during the year (Appendix A). In addition, public services include trash pick up, where necessary, and meeting with neighboring home owners who have questions or concerns in regards to the Preserve.

At this time there are few problems at the preserve. At times there is sign of vagrants living in shacks near and just on the southern boundary of the preserve, but we have cleared old shacks and all debris and have not observed any new shacks recently.

## **REPORTING**

Encompassed within the heading of reporting are all data analysis, GIS and remote sensing, meetings and regional coordination, and photo documentation activities.

Data that has been entered into digital databases include bird count, plant list data. Data on preserve boundary and sensitive species locations have been entered into a GIS database. This report represents the second annual report for this preserve. An annual work plan for the next fiscal year will be provided to the wildlife agencies in late 2003.

Finally, the Preserve manager has maintained all necessary agency permits to allow the continued monitoring of the Preserve's biota.

## **SUMMARY & DISCUSSION**

Management at Kelly Ranch continues to be successful at protecting the Preserve from human encroachment, building baseline biological data, and developing a better understanding of the Preserve and its regional context. Preserve Management in Year 2003-4 will continue in a similar fashion as this year. A detailed work plan for the Year 2003-2004 fiscal year has been developed for this purpose.

## Appendix A.

### Summary of Site Visit Activities

Date	Activity	Hours
11/6/2002	Sign site	3
11/7/2003	Sign site	8
11/12/2002	Check on vagrant problem	1
11/13/2003	Post signs	8
11/14/2003	Post signs	8
11/25/2003	Post signs	2
11/26/2003	patrol and post signs	3
12/3/2002	Patrol	2
12/6/2003	Pick up trash	7
1/2/2003	Put up large sign posts, patrol	1
1/28/2003	Patrol, post sign	1
2/4/2003	Patrol, pick up trash	1
2/14/2003	Meet cdfg, check sign placement	2
3/19/2003	Bird survey	3
4/3/2003	Meet cdfg to discuss potential orcutts hazardia planting, fix some signs	2
4/12/2003	Plant orcutts hazardia	2
4/18/2003	Measure Orcutts hazardia, patrol	1.5
4/25/2003	Brief patrol	0.5
4/28/2003	Water orcutt.s hazardia	1
4/30/2003	Bird survey	3
5/16/2003	Patrol, tag orcutt,s hazardia	2
5/27/2003	Water Orcutt's hazardia	1
6/9/2003	Patrol' meet sdge	1
6/17/2003	Water orcutt,s, patrol	1
7/1/2003	Bird survey, measure and water orcutt's hazardia	4
7/28/2003	Meet habitat restoration to discuss planned restoration project. Water orcutts hazardia	3
8/8/2003	Patrol	2
8/13/2003	Water orcutt' s hazardia patrol	1

## Appendix B. Animal Species Observed

Species Name	Scientific Name	Notes
<b>Invertebrates</b>		
Painted lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	
Acmon blue	<i>Icaricia acmon</i>	
Behr's metalmark	<i>Apodemia mormo virgulti</i>	
<b>Mammals</b>		
Woodrat	<i>Neotoma sp.</i>	nest observed
Cottontail rabbit	<i>Sylvilagus audubonii</i>	
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>	tracks observed
California ground squirrel	<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>	
<b>Herpetofauna</b>		
Orange-throated whiptail	<i>Cnemidophorus hyperythrus beldingi</i>	
Side-blotched lizard	<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	
Western fence lizard	<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>	
Southwestern pacific rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus viridis</i>	

### Bird survey results.

Species	Year 2003 Notes	Species	Year 2003 Notes
<b>Resident</b>		Common raven	
Anna's hummingbird		Great-horned owl	Two observed
Bewicks wren		Hooded oriole	
Bushtit		Killdeer	
Black Phoebe		Nuttall's woodpecker	
California gnatcatcher	DB,NO, 2 pair in 2003	Red-tailed hawk	
California thrasher		Song sparrow	
California towhee		<b>Migrants</b>	
Common Yellowthroat		Blue-gray gnatcatcher	
House finch		White-crowned sparrow	
Lesser goldfinch			
Morning dove			
Northern mockingbird			
Spotted towhee			
Western scrub jay			
Wrentit			
<b>Fly-overs or Uncommon</b>			
American crow			
American kestrel			
Cliff swallow			

NO= Nest observed; DB= Definite breeder;

## Appendix C, plant species observed